

**JOSH GREEN, M.D.**  
Governor

**SYLVIA LUKE**  
Lt. Governor



State of Hawai'i  
**DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE**  
KA 'OIHANA MAHI'AI  
1428 South King Street  
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96814-2512  
Phone: (808) 973-9600 FAX: (808) 973-9613

**SHARON HURD**  
Chairperson, Board of Agriculture

**DEAN M. MATSUKAWA**  
Deputy to the Chairperson

**TESTIMONY OF SHARON HURD**  
**CHAIRPERSON, BOARD OF AGRICULTURE**

**BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE**

**THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 20, 2025**  
**2:00 PM**  
**CONFERENCE ROOM 308 & VIDEOCONFERENCE**

**HOUSE BILL NO. 1237, HD1**  
**RELATING TO BIOSECURITY**

Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Takenouchi and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on House Bill No. 1237, HD1 relating to biosecurity, which appropriates funds to the Department of Agriculture (Department) for agricultural biosecurity and the prevention, detection, and control of invasive species in Maui County.

The Department supports this measure and offers comments. The Department recognizes that Molokai and Lanai have historically not had dedicated Plant Quarantine Branch (PQB) staff, which this measure seeks to rectify. As both islands currently do not have dedicated import or interisland movement volumes, it is suggested that instead of dedicated PQB inspectors, perhaps the use of a number of general professional series workers, a position that could perform other inspections and duties on Molokai and Lanai for the Department, may be the best way to alleviate this issue.

To attempt to bridge the gap in staffing, the Department currently has Maui-based inspectors go to Molokai on a routine basis. Additionally, the Maui staff work closely with the Molokai Invasive Species Committee and Pu Lama Lanai as issues



arise and the Department is appreciative of the important work they do on Molokai and Lanai.

The Department is supportive of any effort that provides additional resources to manage pests throughout the State. While the Department is in support of this measure for Maui County, the Department believes that each county should also have additional resources for coqui control.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.

JOSH GREEN  
GOVERNOR OF HAWAII

SYLVIA LUKE  
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR



## HAWAII INVASIVE SPECIES COUNCIL

1151 PUNCHBOWL ST, #325  
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813

### VOTING MEMBERS

DAWN CHANG  
DEPARTMENT OF LAND & NATURAL  
RESOURCES

SHARON HURD  
HAWAII DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

KATHLEEN HO, D.Env  
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

PARWINDER GREWAL, Ph.D.  
UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII

MARY ALICE EVANS  
BUSINESS, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT &  
TOURISM

DEXTER KISHIDA  
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Chelsea Arnott, HISC Coordinator on behalf of  
HISC Co-Chair Sharon Hurd and Co-Chair Dawn N.S. Chang

### House Committee on FINANCE

Thursday, February 20, 2025  
2:00 PM

State Capitol, Conference Room 308 and Via Videoconference

### In consideration of HOUSE BILL 1237 HOUSE DRAFT 1 RELATING TO BIOSECURITY

House Bill 1237 House Draft 1 appropriates funds to the Department of Agriculture (HDOA) for agricultural biosecurity and the prevention, detection, and control of invasive in Maui County. **The Hawai'i Invasive Species Council (Council) supports this measure.**

HDOA is the only agency with regulatory authorities to inspect, quarantine, and carry out activities to prevent the introduction and spread of invasive species. The establishment of positions to serve Molokai and Lanai will help to improve biosecurity. Both islands have been able to prevent the introduction and establishment of CRB, little fire ants, and coqui frogs through the efforts of the Island Invasive Species Committees and the Pulama Lanai Natural Resource Program.

Invasive species committees are our first line of defense against these threats. These volunteer-based, community-focused organizations are on the ground every day, actively monitoring, detecting, and removing invasive species. The establishment of a Lanai Invasive Species Subcommittee seems like a natural step to ensuring the island is safeguarded from new pests.

This measure is an important step to improving biosecurity for Maui County and recognizes that biosecurity cannot be done by one agency alone. It is also important that this funding is recurring to support the efforts established in this measure and do not lapse.

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of this measure.



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February 20, 2025

HEARING BEFORE THE  
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

**TESTIMONY ON HB 1237, HD1**  
**RELATING TO BIOSECURITY**

Conference Room 308 & Videoconference  
2:00 PM

Aloha Chair Yamashita, Vice-Chair Takenouchi, and Members of the Committee:

I am Brian Miyamoto, Executive Director of the Hawai'i Farm Bureau (HFB). Organized since 1948, the HFB is comprised of 1,800 farm family members statewide and serves as Hawai'i's voice of agriculture to protect, advocate, and advance the social, economic, and educational interests of our diverse agricultural community.

**The Hawai'i Farm Bureau supports HB 1237, HD1**, which appropriates funds to the Department of Agriculture for agricultural biosecurity and the prevention, detection, and control of invasive species in Maui County. Strengthening biosecurity efforts in Maui County is critical to protecting local agriculture, ecosystems, and rural communities from the devastating impacts of invasive pests.

Moloka'i and Lāna'i currently lack a dedicated state agricultural inspector and quarantine facility, leaving these islands vulnerable to the introduction and spread of invasive species. Without early detection and rapid response measures in place, high-risk pathways such as the importation of plants, mulch, used vehicles, and farm equipment increase the likelihood of invasive pests establishing themselves. To date, pests such as the little fire ant, coconut rhinoceros beetle, and coqui frog have not been detected on Moloka'i or Lāna'i, making prevention efforts all the more urgent.

This measure provides funding for general biosecurity professionals for Moloka'i and Lāna'i to monitor cargo entering these islands. It also establishes a Lāna'i Invasive Species Committee as a sub-branch of the Maui Invasive Species Committee, ensuring that local resources are dedicated to invasive species prevention and response. Additionally, HB 1237, HD1 allocates resources to combat the growing threats of little fire ants, coconut rhinoceros beetles, and coqui frogs on Maui, where invasive species management efforts require sustained funding to protect agriculture, the environment, and local communities.

Hawai'i's biosecurity challenges are increasing due to rising global trade and tourism, climate change, and gaps in prevention infrastructure. The cost of controlling invasive species after they become established is significantly higher than the cost of prevention and early intervention. Protecting Moloka'i and Lāna'i from these threats will not only safeguard local agriculture but also preserve these islands as repositories for native species and agricultural biodiversity.

We urge the committee to pass HB 1237, HD1 to enhance agricultural biosecurity in Maui County and protect Hawai'i's farmers, ranchers, and natural resources from the ongoing threat of invasive species.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.



February 19, 2025

The House Committee on Finance  
Thursday, February 19, 2025, 2:00 pm  
Conference Room 308 & Videoconference  
State Capitol, Honolulu, HI

### **Testimony on HB 1237, *Relating to Biosecurity***

Aloha Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Takenouchi, and Members of the Committee on Finance,

Thank you for this opportunity to testify on HB 1237 HD1, *Relating to Biosecurity*, which proposes to allocate funding for biosecurity and invasive species management in Maui County. Mahalo for the increased emphasis on invasive species. The Maui Invasive Species Committee (MISC) supports this measure and offers the following comments.

#### ***Section 2***

**Little Fire Ants:** Section 2 of the bill proposes to appropriate funds for the department of agriculture “to prevent and control little fire ant and coconut rhinoceros beetle infestations in Maui county, including through the hiring of general professionals for biosecurity efforts.” The initial version of the bill proposed to establish full time inspector positions on both Molokai and Lānaʻi. The Department of Agriculture offered testimony explaining that the volume of agricultural commodities arriving on these two islands did not warrant full-time positions and that, in the past, both inspection and response operations for these islands had been performed by a single individual in a hybrid-type position. Based on discussions during the hearing before the Committee on Agriculture and Food Systems, the language was changed to “hiring of general professionals”. MISC supports increased capacity for agricultural inspection for Molokai and Lānaʻi, and for response and control for little fire ants (LFA) and coconut rhinoceros beetle (CRB), but remains concerned that if the legislature intends to increase resources for control of little fire ants, the language is not clear as to who will do the work.

Maui is at a critical point for LFA control—in the last 14 months, eight new infestations were discovered, from Kīpahulu to Napili. Eradication takes time, staff, equipment and expertise. With the exception of extremely small infestations, comprehensive ground surveys are needed to determine the extent of the infestation, followed by 6 to 22 treatments, and surveys for another five years after no ants are detected. MISC is actively treating infestations at 13 different locations and has been the lead entity for control and monitoring at most of the 28 infestations discovered to date. These populations involve 120 properties; each one requires ongoing communication during

delimitation, treatment and monitoring phases. MISC has nine staff focused on LFA; staffing should double to keep up with current locations, and one team should be based in Hāna to address East side locations. A review of efforts to date predicts that eradication of all known sites will at least \$5 million. Funding from the County of Maui and Hawai'i Invasive Species Council are providing essential support, but will not be enough to meet current needs. This work depends on ongoing collaboration with the Hawai'i Department of Agriculture and Hawai'i Ant Lab.

**Coconut rhinoceros beetle:** Section 2 does not specify who will conduct early detection work for CRB in Maui County. Both MISC and the Molokai Invasive Species Committee (MoMISC) are conducting early detection surveys in coordination with Maui County Department of Agriculture and the University of Hawai'i CRB Response team.

### ***Section 3***

**Coqui Frogs:** Section 3 proposes to allocate funding to MISC, as a project of the University of Hawai'i Pacific Cooperative Studies Unit, to combat the spread of coqui frogs in Maui County. To date, MISC has eradicated nearly 30 breeding populations, suppressed coqui in portions of Ha'ikū, and continues to respond to outlier coqui frogs that pop up across the island. MISC manages a community control program that is helping residents take back their quiet nights. Much work remains to be done. MISC supports the opportunity to expand on this vital work with the proposed allocation.

**Lāna'i Subcommittee:** MISC previously conducted invasive species survey and control operations on Lāna'i and would be pleased to collaborate with Pūlama Lāna'i and the broader Lāna'i community to establish a Lāna'i subcommittee.

The three invasive species that are the focus of HB 1237 are also the subject of a signed Memorandum of Agreement among the Department of Agriculture, Department of Land and Natural Resources, and University of Hawai'i. The MoU identifies roles and responsibilities for each County. MISC and MoMISC remain committed to working closely with our partners on invasive species threats to native biodiversity, live-giving waters, local agriculture, and quality of life, and appreciate the intent of this bill to help all partner agencies achieve our common goals.

Mahalo for your consideration.



Teya M. Penniman  
Special Projects Director  
Maui Invasive Species Committee

**HB-1237-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/19/2025 12:22:27 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/20/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
William Prucha	ALAOLU OHANA (Haiku, Maui-based	Support	Written Testimony Only

## Comments:

MISC has worked closely with our organization to assist in identifying and addressing the invasive species impact on our community. Their communication and follow-up has helped to bring land-owners and renters/tenants to better understand and mobilize to address the problem of Little Fire Ants [LFA] and Coqui Frogs [CF]. The battle continues, and with focused efforts by MISC and community residents, we can help to continue the progress made. Without continued support for MISC and their interface with community, the environmental impact will be seen in agriculture (with the LFA) and in quality of living (noise with CF) and potentially on the property values.

The MISC is a good investment in quality of life in Hawaii.

William Prucha

ALAOLU.OHANA

Haiku, Maui





House of Representatives  
Committee on Finance  
Thursday, February 20, 2025  
2:00 PM Conference Room 308 & Videoconference  
State Capitol

### Testimony in Support of HB1237 HD1

Aloha Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Takenouchi, and Members of the Committee,

The Coordinating Group on Alien Pest Species (CGAPS) is **in support of HB1237 HD1, Relating to Biosecurity**. This bill provides appropriations: (1) to the Hawaii Department of Agriculture (HDOA) to prevent and control little fire ant (LFA) and coconut rhinoceros beetle (CRB) in Maui county, including through the hiring of general professionals for biosecurity efforts; (2) to the University of Hawaii Pacific Cooperative Studies Unit (UH-PCSU) for the Maui Invasive Species Committee (MISC) or its Molokai subcommittee (MoMISC) to support education, early detection, response, and control efforts regarding coqui frogs, including by establishing a Lanai Invasive Species Committee as a sub-branch of MISC. HB1237 HD1 also authorizes HDOA to make grants to or enter into contracts with UH-PCSU for MISC or MoMISC.

Since its formation in 2001, MoMISC has effectively provided on-island capacity for pest detection and rapid response and MoMISC is honored to continue this work. However, the on-island presence of an HDOA official is necessary to conduct the official duties of HDOA. On Lanai, partnership work with Pūlama Lāna'i has been critical for pest detection and rapid response, but they cannot fulfill the regulatory duties of HDOA.

We hope that any Invasive Species Committee established for Lanai is able to address all high-impact invasive species and is not limited to coqui frog.

Mahalo for the opportunity to support the bill and for consideration of our testimony.

Aloha,

Christy Martin, CGAPS Program Manager

Stephanie Easley, CGAPS Legal Fellow



# MAUI

CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

VOICE OF BUSINESS

HEARING BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE  
HAWAII STATE CAPITOL, HOUSE CONFERENCE ROOM 308  
Thursday, February 20, 2025 AT 2:00 P.M.

To The Honorable Representative Kyle T. Yamashita, Chair  
The Honorable Representative Jenna Takenouchi, Vice Chair  
Members of the Committee on Finance

## SUPPORT HB1237 HD1 RELATING TO BIOSECURITY

The Maui Chamber of Commerce **SUPPORTS HB1237 HD1**, which appropriates funds to the Department of Agriculture for agricultural biosecurity and the prevention, detection, and control of invasive species in Maui County.

The Chamber notes that as an island state, Hawaii has the unique advantage of being able to prevent the spread of invasive species through isolation, allowing non-infected islands to serve as critical repositories for native plants and species threatened by infestations elsewhere. This proactive approach to biosecurity will help safeguard Hawaii's environment, economy, and culture.

We support this initiative to address critical gaps in Maui county's agricultural biosecurity and the prevention, detection, and control of invasive species in Maui County by appropriating funds for these purposes.

For these reasons, we strongly **SUPPORT HB1237 HD1** and respectfully request its passage.

Sincerely,

Pamela Tumpap  
President

To advance and promote a healthy economic environment for business, advocating for a responsive government and quality education, while preserving Maui's unique community characteristics.

**HB-1237-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/19/2025 11:38:33 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/20/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
GEORGE HELLAND	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

MISC has eliminated Fire Ants and Coqui frogs from our farm. It is crucial in our role of providing fruit to the island to have these pests eliminated. This bill is an important next step. Thank you

**HB-1237-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/19/2025 11:43:45 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/20/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Benton Kealii Pang, Ph.D.	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair and Members of the Committee,

My name is Benton Pang, and I strongly support SB1100 to strengthen biosecurity efforts in Hawai‘i. Invasive species like coqui frogs, little fire ants (LFA), and coconut rhinoceros beetles (CRB) threaten our ecosystems, agriculture, and communities.

Maui has had 28 LFA incursions, with eight new sites in the past 14 months. MISC has led containment efforts but needs more resources to prevent further spread. CRB also poses a growing risk, requiring increased inspection and response capacity. This bill also supports coqui frog control and establishes a Lāna‘i Invasive Species Subcommittee to improve response efforts.

However, the current language does not explicitly fund MISC and MoMISC for LFA and CRB. These organizations are critical in containment and should receive direct support. Maui County has led the way in invasive species management, and this bill would provide much-needed State resources.

I urge the Committee to ensure direct funding for MISC and MoMISC to maximize effectiveness. Mahalo for your time.

Sincerely,  
Benton Kealii Pang, Ph.D.

**HB-1237-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/19/2025 11:46:39 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/20/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Suzanne Fields	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Greetings legislators.

I could not IMPLORE YOU IN ANY STRONGER LANGUAGE THAN THIS:

We MUST take whatever steps are available to ensure that our biosecurity issues are addressed in the most comprehensive way possible. Allocate the resources now so that our future is not jeopardized to the point of no return!!!!

I live in Haiku, Maui and am a farmer on my 1/2 acre property that borders the Eastern Maui Irrigation reservoir that is contiguous with Maliko Gulch. I have personally experienced the every increasing impact of coqui frog - SO LOUD and in such great volumes now that I need to shut my windows and doors in the evening as the sound is deafening.

With the decimation of the MISC Coqui Crew, I have tried to manage the coqui on my own but it is a LOSING BATTLE!

When MISC was fully staffed, I was grateful that the MISC tanker truck and response team was able to access both my property and the EMI Reservoir to spray - their work successfully held the coqui somewhat at bay but now, without a response team, the coqui are OUT OF CONTROL!

MISC also kept a sound meter on the edge of my property to monitor the coqui population; sadly, with their limited resources, they needed to remove the sound meter and use it elsewhere for a bird project. Clearly, more sound meters are critical to monitor the coqui frog population, collect data, and ensure that resources can be effectively targeted.

BOTH the Coqui Crew and the monitoring resources are no longer available and MUST BE RESTORED AND EXPANDED!

**NOW is our opportunity to squelch the coqui AND address CRB before they rise to the level of invasion that coqui have on our beautiful Maui.**

**PLEASE support any and all resources to stop these threats to our environment.**

In addition to multiple tree crops, I also harvest and sell coconut. Without the ESSENTIAL BIOSECURITY SUPPORT. our island is doomed to go the way of the Big Island re: coqui and ALL of Hawaii Nei is in jeopardy if the CRB are not eradicated.

Thank you!

Suzanne Fields

**HB-1237-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/19/2025 11:49:43 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/20/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
wendy hudson	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

## Comments:

Aloha- I live on Kaluanui Road next to Maliko Gulch which was ground zero for the coqui invasion on Maui. **I now sleep with a pillow over my head because the frogs are SO loud.** MISC has been instrumental in helping us to push the frogs back but they are severely understaffed and often can only offer free citric acid to us so we can do the spraying ourselves. I work fulltime and my husband is disabled and I am often just too tired to spray at night. I have to suit up, mix up the potion. drag the sprayer around the yard, and hope that I can get at least some of the frogs. It needs to be done weekly just to keep them away from our windows. I even hand catch them and freeze them to their death. The whole invasion has really impacted our sleep as well as our enjoyment of our property after dark! We can't sit on our lanai because we can't hear each other talk unless we yell!

***MISC really needs more funding.*** Their's is a thankless job and they have many shifts after dark. We totally appreciate their efforts but it is not enough to combat this invasive species. **Once you, yourself, have them on your property, you will understand what a nuisance they are.** Just listen to any live news broadcast from the Big Island and you will hear and then understand the breadth of the problem! I am sure our property value has suffered because of the noise.

***Please FUND MISC. This bill isn't perfect but the main thing is that you give MORE money to MISC for coqui and fire ant eradication.***

Mahalo,

Wendy Hudson

**HB-1237-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/19/2025 11:52:37 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/20/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Carole Harris	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

## Comments:

Aloha! I live in Haiku, above the Haiku market. We are surrounded by coqui frogs and they are spreading like wildfire towards Kauhikoa. We need Mayor Bissen to call a state of emergency in regards to the spread of the coqui. Studies from UH state that 87% of coqui carry Rat Lung Disease. This could turn into a health crisis. With consistent spraying we still can beat this problem. MISC needs to get back on their weekly spray program, get the news to the media and educate the community.

Sincerely, Dr Carole Harris



**HB-1237-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/19/2025 11:59:31 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/20/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Cynthia Conrad	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

## Comments:

Coqui Frogs have surrounded my property in Makawao, Maui, HI, for 12 years and it's getting worse as they multiply and spread. My property value has gone down because of the deafening noise every night. It takes MISC 4-6 months to come to my property and spray, due to a staff shortage, and by then it's too late. Please include adequate funding in HB1237 for coqui frog eradication. We don't want Maui to become like the Big Island where the frogs are now impossible to eradicate. Thank you.

**HB-1237-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/19/2025 12:13:05 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/20/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
David Magenheim	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

this is in regards to funding the Maui invasive species committee .  
as resident of Hawaii for the past 22 years living at the same place pre-coqui And I must  
state that MISC does a spectacular job at controlling and hopefully eradicating the coqui

I can tell you that in our neighborhood of Maui Ranch Estates. There are two properties that have  
and continue to be a part of the frog infestation problem and I can assure that if Misc did not  
have the funding, thus section of Maui would be completely overrun with coqui frogs

it is with a tremendous love of Hawaii

I would strongly recommend you to fund MISC and do everything that we can to continue to  
fight back against this invasive species situation that is on the rise here in Maui and to a larger  
extent the state

thank you

David Magenheim

**HB-1237-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/19/2025 12:14:42 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/20/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Chuck Chimera	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

## Comments:

Aloha Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Takenouchi, and Members of the House Committee on Finance,

As a former Maui resident now living on Hawai‘i Island, I’m experiencing first hand the devastating impacts of unchecked invasive species like the little fire ant (LFA) and coqui frog. These infestations have become permanent, costly burdens on our environment, agriculture, and quality of life. Maui Nui must not face the same fate, which is why swift, well-funded action is critical.

I strongly support HB1237 to bolster biosecurity in Maui County but urge you to amend the bill to ensure dedicated funding for the Maui Invasive Species Committee (MISC), Moloka‘i/MoMISC, and the proposed Lanai invasive species committee. These groups will be essential for controlling LFA, coconut rhinoceros beetles (CRB), and coqui frogs on their respective islands.

While HB1237 provides vital funding, it lacks explicit financial guarantees for MISC and MoMISC. These organizations lead early detection, rapid response, and long-term management efforts. Without stable funding, Maui and Moloka‘i risk following Hawai‘i Island’s grim reality, where LFA stings, crop losses, and coqui frog noise have become pervasive. CRB could further devastate coconut trees, other economically and culturally important palms, and native species like the loulu.

I urge you to amend HB1237 to include direct appropriations for MISC and MoMISC, ensuring they can continue protecting Maui County from irreversible invasive species damage. Thank you for your leadership in preserving Hawai‘i’s natural heritage for current and future generations.

Mahalo,

Chuck Chimera

Honokaa (formerly Makawao), HI

**HB-1237-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/19/2025 12:30:57 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/20/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lauren A. Lipcon	Individual	Comments	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

My name is Lauren Lipcon and I own 2 acres of AG land in Maliko Gulch. We are converting a neglected coffee farm into a fruit forest and are also working towards farming hawaiian tropicals for luxe XL arrangements.

We are basically at Cocqui ground zero. When I purchased 2 years ago, MISC was providing excellent support with regular sprayings. We had the frogs pushed so far back that they were close to gone. Then suddenly MISC stopped coming. They told me they lose their funding. All of the work that was previously done was lost. The frogs have inundated our property and farm and are destroying our eco system, plus simple but necessary things like sleeping are challenging. Also renting our ohana to a long term tenant is also challenging in part due to the frogs. Not to mention the threat to property value.

MISC services are CRITICAL to protect our eco system, whether it be the frogs, ants or coconut rhinoceros. We have over 150 rare palms on the property and if the beetle were to take them out it would be devastating.

Please give MISC the funding they need to protect our delicate paradise. They need funding, and our environment needs to be #1. We only have one Maui. Let's protect it.

Mahalo,

Lauren Lipcon

**HB-1237-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/19/2025 12:35:31 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/20/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Herbert Chang	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please approve. I live in Haiku Maui. The services provided to our community is invaluable. The spread of coqui frogs needs to be controlled. Help us eradicate the frogs.

**HB-1237-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/19/2025 1:08:24 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/20/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Joanne Parker	Individual	Comments	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I am writing in support of providing MISC a minimum of \$2,000,000 in annual funding to continue to fight and hopefully eradicate the coqui frog population on Maui.

My husband and I are Hawaii residents, own a 2 acre property in Haiku and are having to monitor and spray our property for coqui frogs 2-3 times per week. The frog population in this area has surged incredibly over the past year and it has been very disruptive to our lives. Our nights are no longer quiet, we no longer sleep with the windows open, and it is physically demanding for us to maintain this effort. We have seen the impact of coqui on the island of Hawaii, and it's very worrisome to think that our largest asset could lose significant value due to a frog invasion. These frogs multiply rapidly, have a voracious appetite that puts Hawai'i's unique insects and spiders at risk. They can also compete with endemic birds and other native fauna that rely on insects for food. PLEASE CONTINUE TO FUND THE EFFORT TO MITIGATE THIS INVASIVE SPECIES! MAHALO NUI

**HB-1237-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/19/2025 1:43:47 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/20/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Katharine Popenuk	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

## Comments:

I have actually moved from Haiku Maui because of the Coqui frogs. After fighting the frogs with the essential help of MISC personnel, it seemed to me to be a hopeless task with a zero percent chance for success. It is hard to believe that the frogs are still in force, for all these years. Please give them the money they need to finally finish the job, once and for ever.

Sincerely Katharine Popenuk formerly of 22 Laenani St. Haiku

**HB-1237-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/19/2025 1:51:05 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/20/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Christine L. Andrews, J.D.	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

**I am a long-time resident of Wailuku, Maui, and a long-time supporter of the important work of the Maui Invasive Species Committee. I SUPPORT HB1237 to provide funding for MISC and the creation of the Lanai Invasive Species Committee.**

**Maui has had 28 incursions of little fire ants. MISC has been the lead entity for delimitation, treatment, and monitoring for more 90% of those sites. In the last 14 months, eight new locations were discovered. MISC needs more resources to prevent little fire ants from becoming unstoppable. Maui has suffered enough over the past few years, thank you very much, we do not need to add little fire ants to our issues!**

**The County of Maui has been a leader among the other Counties in supporting work on invasive species, including on little fire ants and coqui frogs. This bill would provide necessary State resources to support that work. The amounts initially proposed were \$3 million for inspection / control work on little fire ant and coconut rhinoceros beetles, \$2 million for coqui frogs, and \$250,000 for the creation of a Lānaʻi Invasive Species Committee. These allocations are a wise investment in invasive species control.**

**Thank you for your support of this bill.**



**HB-1237-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/19/2025 4:24:25 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/20/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jay Penniman	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

This bill was originally directing resources to Maui and Molokai to combat CRB, Little fire ants and coqui frogs. Please do that, and do it directly to MISC and MOMISC. These organizations know what needs to be done. They have developed successful detection, control and eradication protocols. Keep HISC funding with DLNR and increase the funding to truly address the problems. While the push to adequately fund HDOA for this work may be well intentioned, HDOA has shown itself to be incapable of hiring and effectively directing control and eradication of these species. Please do not curse Maui and Molokai with out of control infestations of LFA and coqui frogs by undercutting the professionals at MOMISC and MISC. And provide them with the resources to stay on top of CRB movement, following up detections with effective control so eradication is assured. Mahalo.

**HB-1237-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/19/2025 4:26:16 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/20/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Patrick Chee	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Takenouchi and members of the Finance Committee,

I urge you to **support HB1237**. Although there may be some logistics to work out with the bill, the intent to increase biosecurity in Maui County is good and necessary to prevent the spread of critically impactful invasive species to islands that do not currently have them. Coconut Rhinoceros Beetle, Little Fire Ant, and Coqui Frogs have thus far not become established on Molokai and Lanai and it is critical that there be an increased effort to keep it that way.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify in support of HB 1237.

Patrick Chee

**HB-1237-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/19/2025 4:41:53 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/20/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Ben Holz	Individual	Comments	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

It is imperative that the Maui Invasive Species Committee (MISC) receives full, sustained funding. We are on the brink of facing not one, but three significant invasive species threats. As someone who lives in a coqui-prone area, I have seen firsthand the damage these frogs can cause. Their unchecked spread would substantially erode the quality of life for local residents. Thanks to MISC's diligent efforts, many remain unaware of these looming dangers. Undermining their funding now would jeopardize the safety and beauty of our islands for future generations.

**HB-1237-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/19/2025 7:43:33 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/20/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Masako Cordray	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am testifying in support of HB1237. I have been a full time farmer in Hamakualoa Maui for more than than 50 years. I have seen the damage done by many invasive species. MISC has a record of success with LFA detection, treatment and eradication. Additionally, the ongoing, difficult work of coqui frog control is a significant benefit. The detection and elimination of incipient CRB sites on Maui offers hope of a healthy biological future.

I implore you to fund the essential work of the Maui Invasive Species Committee.

Mahalo, Masako Cordray

**HB-1237-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/19/2025 8:49:38 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/20/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kim Harter	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support this Bill!

It is urgent that we support MISC's efforts to control and/or eliminate the spread of coqui frogs, little fire ants and rhinoceros beetles. They have been doing a remarkable job with the few resources they have. They are prepared and set up to do this work.

I am currently visiting Kona. The coqui and little fire ants have taken over. No more quiet nights. The coqui calls are loud and constant. No more walks in nature without the potential of getting stung. Please, there is still a chance to prevent this from happening on Maui, Molokai and Lanai.

Pono, Malama the aina,

Sincerly, Kim Harter

**HB-1237-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/19/2025 10:34:29 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/20/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Evelyn B Billington	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please, I urge ALL of you, to support and pass HB1237 HD1--the unique and extremely vulnerability of all of Hawai'i depends on it. We're losing endangered species at a faster rate than anywhere else in the world. And invasive species are a major part of the problem. We live on Maui, but we've experienced the noise created by the coqui frogs on the Big Island and are willing to do whatever necessary to prevent them spreading any further than they already have. Areas of fire ants have been eradicated successfully in several places on Maui, and I hope, with the help of MISC, that can continue to be true. Friends of ours living in Haiku discovered fire ants on their property--working with MISC they were able to be completely contained and eradicated. For all of our sakes, and for the aina, please support this bill. Mahalo nui loa for all that you do for us.

**HB-1237-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/20/2025 7:59:32 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/20/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
John P Gerry	Individual	Comments	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Maui Invasive Species Committee has done a fabulous job of bio-security on the islands. They do need funding. Please provide this funding to MISC and not some other place.

**HB-1237-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/20/2025 8:15:02 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/20/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jennifer Owen	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly support MISC's vital work controlling the little fire ant and coqui frogs. I live in Ha`iku on Maui, and am the organizer for a neighborhood group that is keeping coqui frogs out of my neighborhood. Without the support of MISC, we would not be able to do this vital work, that allows me and my husband to sleep at night. I and my neighbors do the actual work of spraying our yards for coqui, but MISC is critical to the effort by supplying the citric acid solution and tanks and hoses and pumps for us to easily perform the spraying. Without MISC, my yard and literally my whole neighborhood would be overrun with coqui, and none of us would sleep at night.

I would also hate for little fire ants to spread over Maui. Those creatures would be a nightmare! And without MISC's efforts, they would be out of control. Hawai`i must not let up in MISC's work to control these horrible pests. Little fire ants would keep us from being able to walk around outside our houses, without tiny ants dropping out of our trees and bushes and horribly biting us.



**HB-1237-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/20/2025 10:40:13 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/20/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Megan Kanekoa	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support funding any efforts to eradicate invasive species. Especially the little fire ants and coqui frogs.

**HB-1237-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/20/2025 11:32:26 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/20/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Sandra delgado	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha All,

I support HB1237 to fund efforts to control little fire ants (LFA), coconut rhinoceros beetles (CRB), and coqui frogs in Maui County.

These invasive species are a growing threat to our environment, agriculture, and way of life. Maui has already had 28 little fire ant infestations, with eight new sites found in just the last 14 months. Without more resources, these pests could become unstoppable.

The Maui Invasive Species Committee (MISC) has led the fight against LFA, managing 90% of cases on Maui. They need more funding to continue this critical work. This bill would also help create a Lanai Invasive Species Subcommittee, improving prevention efforts.

I urge you to fully fund HB1237 to protect our communities and natural resources.

Blessings

Mahalo Sandra

**HB-1237-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/20/2025 12:32:03 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/20/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Alena Danskikh	Individual	Comments	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please, provide more funding to MISC on Maui to control coqui frogs. We've lived in several places in Haiku since 2010, and coqui frogs have been spreading, including larger original infestation area around Maliko gulch and new infestations on Lanikai Place and West Kuiaha. This results in less and less livable area in Haiku, which contributes to the housing problem.

**HB-1237-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/20/2025 1:42:36 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/20/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Momi Vee	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

SIMPLEST This is the most aggressive invasion of insects and tiny creatures ever to come here to Hawai'I. They are now capable of destroying our very delicate environment.!!! Not to mention our sanity, when listening to coqui frogs, they don't belong here, our endemic species are all but extinct and or on the verge. Let's do all we can to eradicate these invasive species immediately.!!! Before it gets to far out of our hands.